

Why Should YOU attend the TWG Annual Meeting?

A message from our EFCOG Board chairperson, DJ Johnson:

“As we continue the tradition we’ve upheld for the past ten years, we are pleased to announce this workshop will be offered at no registration fee. To maximize our resources and ensure that we are leveraging our attendance wisely, individual sites must exercise fiscal responsibility when determining the number of in-person attendees. Priority should be given to individuals who have not previously attended, as this allows for fresh perspectives and broader representation. For those who are unable to join us on-site, we are excited to offer a dynamic virtual experience. This format will enable broad participation and engagement without incurring unnecessary travel expenses. Let’s work together to make attendance at this workshop impactful and cost-effective for our respective missions.”

We are excited about your opportunity to attend our **11th Annual TWG Meeting. Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL)** is hosting the EFCOG TWG event in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. We believe your participation will be extremely beneficial for the laboratories, teams, and professional development.

We recognize the challenges that exist when requesting to participate in events, so we have created this helpful key discussion points to present to your boss when requesting to attend the annual meeting. Being prepared helps to show them how ready you are for growth and how attending will benefit your site, your team, and your professional growth.

Here are some important points to discuss:

1. Business Value

Networking Opportunities: The meeting attracts leadership from across DOE/NNSA.

These interactions, whether during formal sessions or informal networking events, offer a chance to gain insights into the broader DOE/NNSA strategic priorities, ensure the training offered remains relevant, and support the overall mission.

Learning Best Practices: You can review the session schedule and highlight the sessions, workshops, or speakers that align with your site’s goals and team priorities.

Collaborative Edge: You should try to emphasize how attending will help you stay updated on learning trends, tools, and strategies that build competencies to support the DOE mission.

2. Specific Takeaways

Skill Development: Look for sessions and experiences that build your skills, improve the training at your site, or address gaps in your existing training needs.

Knowledge Sharing: Offer to commit to sharing what you learn with your team through a presentation, report, or workshop after the conference to bring back value.

3. Cost-Benefit Analysis

Breakdown Costs: Be sure to clearly estimate travel expenses and remind your boss that there is **no cost to register**. Try to demonstrate how these sessions are cost-effective.

Return on Investment (ROI): Explain how the knowledge, connections, or tools gained will outweigh the costs. For example, learning about National Training Center (NTC) course offerings could save your site money, increase productivity, and improve efficiency.

4. Alignment with Site Goals

Relevance to Projects: Tie the meeting content to specific learning initiatives at your site.

Strategic Fit: Observing what ORNL is working on through tours and activities gives you a first-hand view of how you might align training efforts between sites. It will also be an opportunity to share best practices that make your national laboratory, plant, or site shine.

5. Professional Development

Skill Enhancement: Emphasize how the meeting will help you grow in your role, making you more effective and valuable to your site and team.

Employee Retention and Engagement: Remind them that investing in employee development boosts morale, effectiveness, and loyalty.

6. Minimal Disruption

Coverage Plan: Assure your boss that your responsibilities will be covered while you're away. Offer a plan for delegating tasks or working ahead or upon return to minimize disruption.

Efficient Use of Time: Mention that you'll focus on the most relevant sessions and make the most of your time at the meeting. Ask your boss if there is a particular session that would benefit you in your role, or one they would like shared when you return.

7. Examples of Success

Case Studies: If possible, share examples of colleagues who attended previous EFCOG annual meetings and brought back valuable insights for your site.

Sample Pitch to Your Boss:

I'm requesting approval to attend the **2026 EFCOG TWG Annual Meeting**. This year, they will have a variety of concurrent sessions and keynote presentations with special speakers from across the DOE complex to improve our knowledge, skills, and collaboration as learning professionals. The sessions on [specific topics] directly align with our goals, such as [specific site goal]. I also look forward to networking with [specific groups within the TWG], which could open doors for partnerships or new ideas. The cost will be minimal because there is no registration cost. The only expenses are three days travel and lodging costs. After the meeting, I'll share key takeaways with the team so we can all benefit from the insights. I believe this is a valuable investment for both my professional growth and the site's success.